DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 447 389 CG 030 498

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TITLE	Assessment Practice in Student Affairs: An Application Manual. First Edition. The Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series.
ISBN	ISBN-0-7879-5053-X
PUB DATE	2001-00-00
NOTE	510p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Jossey Bass Publishers, 350 Sansome St., San Francisco, CA 94104 ($33). Tel: 415-433-1740; Fax: 800-605-2665 (Toll Free); Web site: http://www.josseybass.com.
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Evaluation Methods; *Evaluation Needs; Focus Groups; Higher Education; Institutional Evaluation; *Organizational Effectiveness; *Performance Based Assessment; Standards; *Student Personnel Services; Student Personnel Workers; Surveys

ABSTRACT

Colleges and universities have come under increasing pressure from various constituencies to demonstrate their effectiveness in measurable terms and to justify their existence in an era of declining resources. A critical element in meeting these demands is a systematic and comprehensive approach to assessment, which demonstrates the effectiveness of student affairs services, programs, and facilities. This publication gives readers the context within which to view assessment, along with some practical tools for developing selected instruments. Part One leads off with two chapters that summarize an approach to assessment and provide the steps in the assessment process. Part Two explores qualitative assessment methodologies, and includes a chapter on how to conduct focus groups. It also discusses quantitative methodologies, and compares locally developed and commercially developed quantitative instruments. It provides information on data collection and analysis; and includes a discussion on mailed questionnaires, telephone surveys, and Web-based surveys. Part Three delves into more specifics including assessing needs; satisfaction; outcomes; environments; cost effectiveness; and accreditation. It also covers several specialized assessment studies, including assessment dropouts, alumni, and group educational programs. Part Four focuses on assessing selected student services and programs such as first-year programs; recreation programs; financial aid; admissions; residence life; college unions; health services; career services; counseling services; judicial affairs; and Greek life. Part Five considers additional assessment issues, including getting started; arranging for consultants; ethical issues; and strategies for implementing an assessment program. The Resources section is an annotated bibliography of assessment instruments. (Contains 4 appendixes, 62 exhibits, 3 tables, and 281 references.) (JDM)

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